

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 31, 124-125, and 127-133.

31. (Currently amended) A gate electrode comprising:

an insulative layer disposed on a substrate;

a ~~uniform cross-section~~ gate layer disposed on said insulative layer, the gate layer being of uniform width along a height thereof;

thin first spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said gate layer;

thin second spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said thin first spacers;

thin third spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said thin second spacers;

thick fourth spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said thin third spacers; and

a conductive layer disposed on said gate layer, wherein at least part of the conductive layer is wider than said gate layer.

123. (Previously added) The gate electrode of claim 31, wherein the conductive layer has a non-uniform cross-section defined by a narrower base section which is in contact with the gate layer, and a wider top section.

124. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 12340, wherein the thin first spacers and the thin second spacers are deformed to accommodate the wider top section of the conductive layer.

125. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 12340, wherein the part of the conductive layer that is wider than the gate layer rests on at least the first thin spacer.

126. (Previously added) The gate electrode of claim 31 wherein said insulative layer comprises an oxide.

127. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 12643 wherein said gate layer comprises a polysilicon.

128. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 12744 wherein said conductive layer comprises a polycide.

129. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 12845 wherein said thin first spacers comprise an oxide.

130. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 12946 wherein said thin second spacers comprise a nitride.

131. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 13047 wherein said thin third spacers comprise an oxide.

132. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 13148 wherein said thick fourth spacers comprise a nitride.

133. (Currently amended) The gate electrode of claim 13249 wherein said polycide comprises titanium salicide (TiSi_2).